(c) Dental Council of India has reported that no ineligible college was recommended for recognition at its meeting held on 28-29 October, 2002. It is stated that the cases of only those dental colleges are considered by the Council for recognition, which are found eligible for the purpose after requisite insepction.

Ill-effects of Tattoos

2732. SHRI SHAHID SIDDIQUI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that tattoos on the human skin are leading to leprosy; and

(b) if so, the steps Government are going to take to curb and use of tattoos?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The known probable methods of spread of mycobacteria lepreae are by the droplet infections and by prolonged skin to skin contact with an infectious untreated leprosy case.

Mysterious disease in Karnataka

2733. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN:

SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN :

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that mysterious disease plagues few villages in the northern part in Bidar District of Karnataka; and

(b) if so, the remedial action taken to protect the citizens from this mysterious mental disorder?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) and (b) Government is aware of a mysterious problem called "Bhanamati" in the districts of Bidar and Gulbarga of Karnataka. During 1980, this problem was investigated by a committee headed by Dr. H. Narasimhaiah, former Vice-Chancellor of Bangalore University and a well known rationalist. Mental health experts from NIMHANS examined all the victims of "Bhanamati". The victims were actually suffering from known physical and mental disorders.

Remedial steps were taken in the form of public education and traininc of doctors and health workers. After these remedial steps, the incidence of "Bhanamati" has come down and only a few sporadic cases are reported.

New drug policy

2734. SHRI KHAN GHUFRAN ZAHIDI:

SHRI MUNAWAR HASAN:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Supreme Court had intervened on the issue of drug policy; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and by when Government propose to come out with a new drug policy?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government had announced the 'Pharmaceutical Policy 2002' in February, 2002. However, a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) filed in the High Court of Karnataka at Bangalore resulted in an order passed by the Hon'ble Court dated 12.11.02, which stopped the Government from implementing the price control regime of the Pharmaceutical Policy 2002. The Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals filed a Special Leave Petition (SLP) before the Supreme Court of India against the order of the Karnataka High Court, which has been admitted as SLP (C) No. 3668/2003. The matter is presently *sub-judice.*

Import policy of drugs

2735. SHRI UDAY PRATAP SINGH: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that import of intermediates do not require any registration under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act;

(b) the policy with regard to dual use of drugs which can be used as intermediates;

(c) whether I DMA has made any representation that such dual use drugs which can be used as intermediates be exempted from registration; and